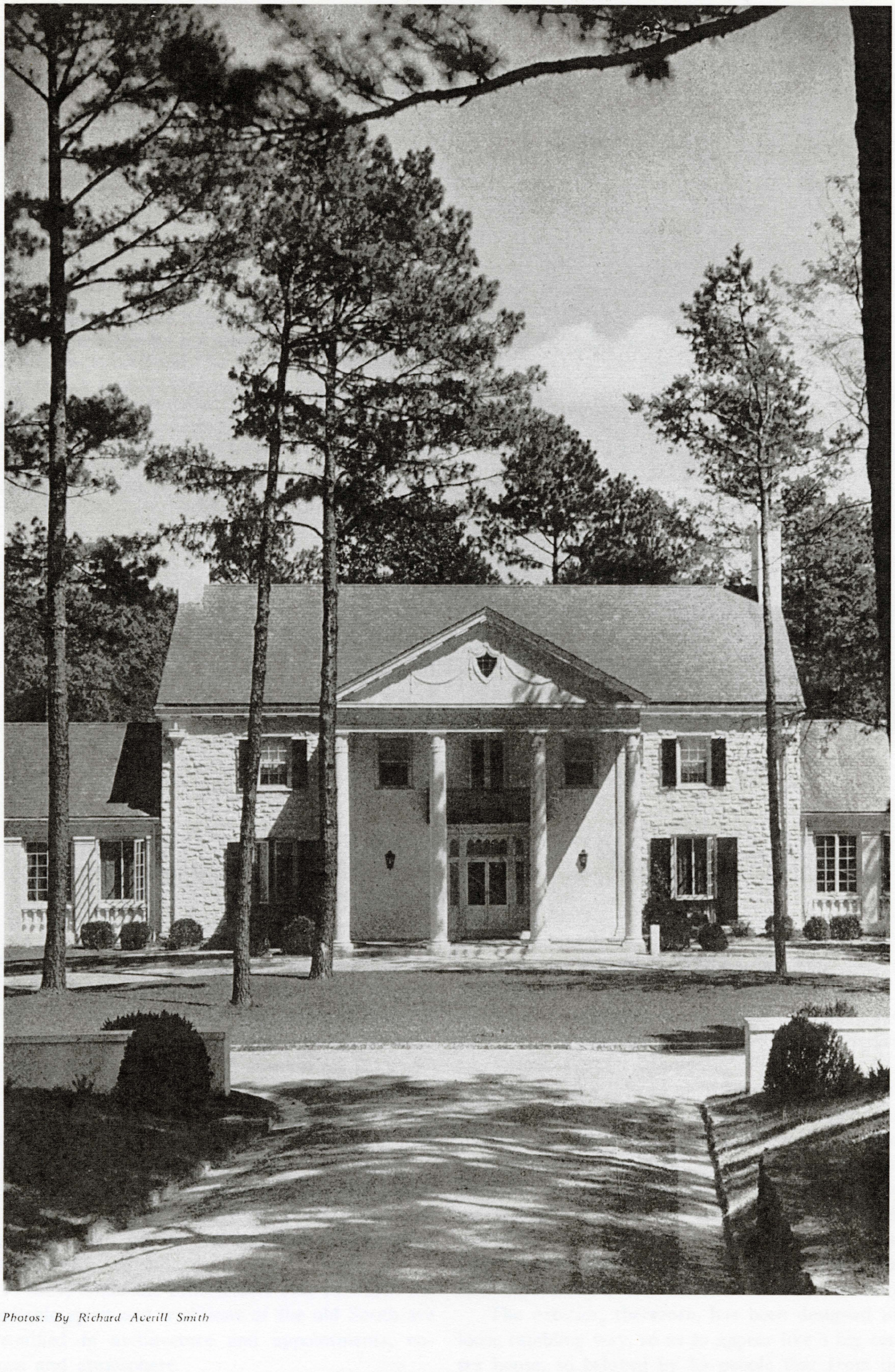
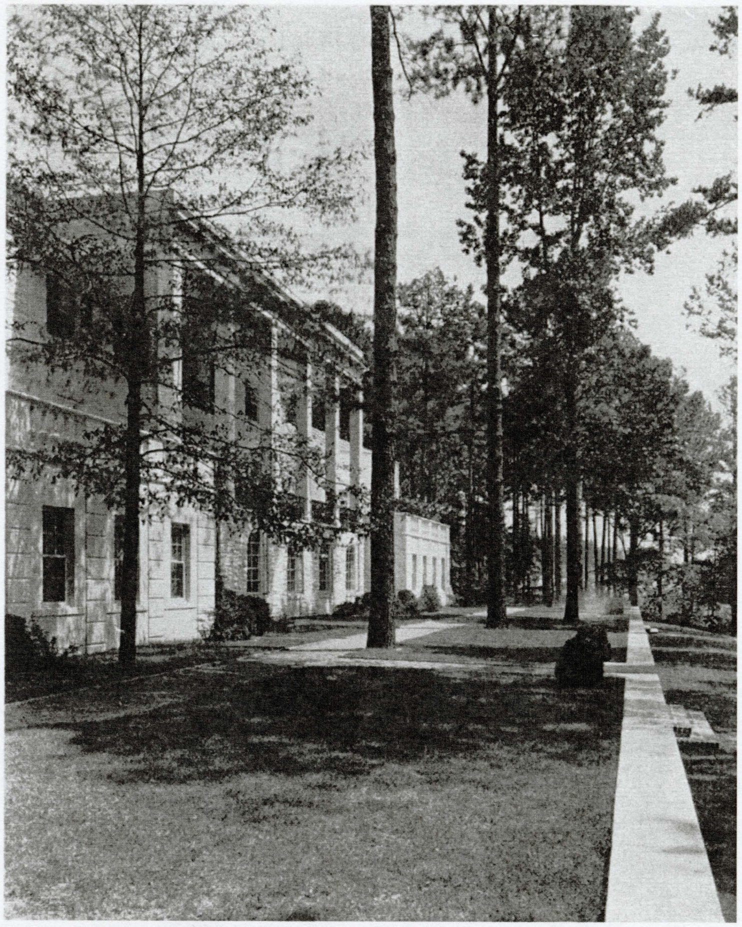


Photos: By Richard Averill Smith

MOUNTAIN BROOK COUNTRY CLUB

The Problem

The design to be Early American Colonial carrying out the rich traditions of the ante-bellum South. To be gracious enough to be luxurious, yet intimate enough to be homelike. That it would neither be a small country hotel nor an enlarged and exclusive roadhouse, but rather a conveninet, comfortable, and beautiful country residence.



MOUNTAIN BROOK COUNTRY CLUB

Birmingham, Ala.

ONE hundred and eighty rolling acres in the southern portion of Shades Valley, cupped by two ridges of Shades Mountain, watered by a winding brook, studded with natural hazards, was selected for fulfillment of a new ideal for country club developments in Birmingham. This ideal is:

A friendly club, whose membership is restricted to a small and congenial coterie of cultured people with kindred tastes, interests, and acquaintances.

A restful club, ensconced in a serene and peaceful setting, affording a delightful privacy and welcome seclusion from the din and dust of a growing industrial city.

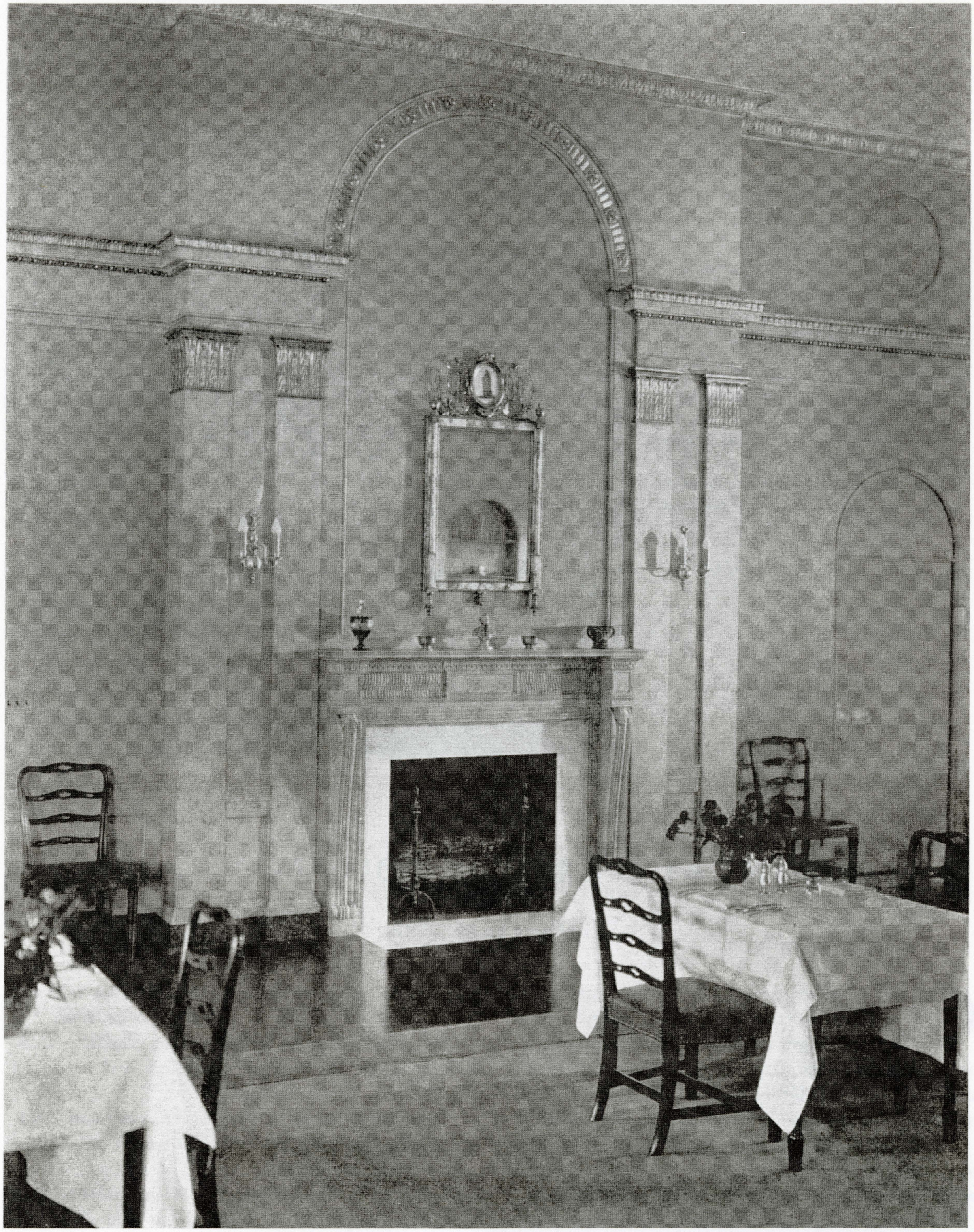
A cozy, homelike, comfortable club in which the hospitable spirit and traditions of the old South are personified in architecture and appointments, environs and atmosphere.

A serviceable club, which combines the convenience and the service of an up-to-date hotel with the informality and charm of a country residence.

An enjoyable club, which affords complete facilities for healthful outdoor recreation and diversion and pleasant social contact.

The club house is of that Early American Colonial design, so long associated with the rich traditions of the ante-bellum South. There is a graciousness enough to be luxurious, yet so intimate that hominess completely permeates it. This club was planned with the idea that when it was completed it would be neither a small country hotel nor an enlarged and exclusive roadhouse, but rather a convenient, comfortable, and beautiful country residence.

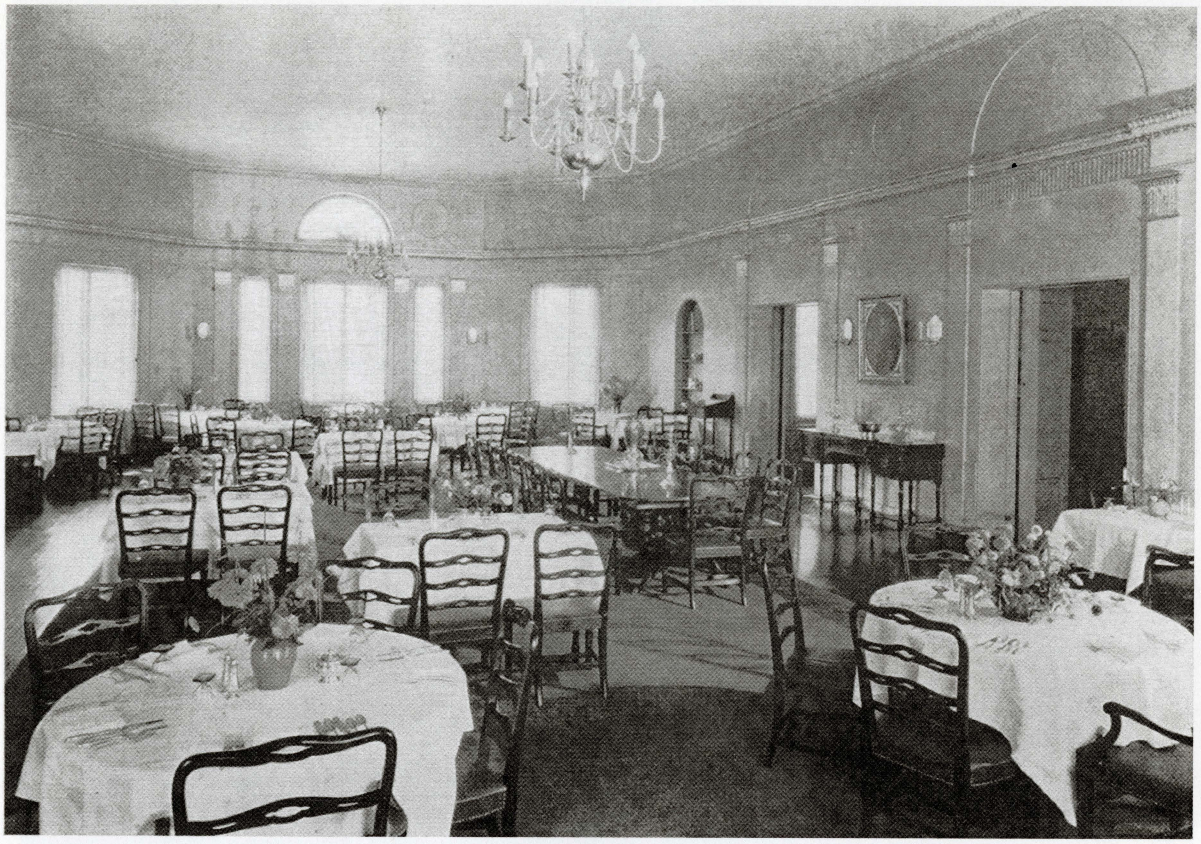
The exterior, therefore, has been designed in a loose rambling way, so as to appear like a big country house, so beloved by its people that from time to time enlargements were necessary. Factors which



DETAIL IN DINING ROOM

MOUNTAIN BROOK COUNTRY CLUB, BIRMINGHAM, ALA.

AYMAR EMBURY, II, AND MILLER & MARTIN, ASSOCIATED ARCHITECTS



DINING ROOM, MOUNTAIN BROOK COUNTRY CLUB, BIRMINGHAM, ALA.

suggest the institution were carefully avoided. It is, of course, fire resistant; its exterior walls are of whitewashed brick and stone, the roof of small rough slates, the floor of concrete finished with wood on the interior and varicolored stone on the exterior.

All the features which are requisite in the modern country club have been included. These are so disposed as to be readily accessible but without the undue emphasis on the service elements which tend to mar the homelike atmosphere that should be characteristic of a building which is, after all, the communal home of its members, and not a casino.

The entrance is under a porte cochere, large enough to hold two cars at a time, and leads into a vestibule, flanked by a check room and the club office. From the vestibule one enters a long hall leading on the right to the dining rooms and the men's locker rooms and grill, and on the left to the ball room, the card room, the women's lounge, lockers, etc. Immediately opposite the entrance is a large general lounge with a fireplace at each end and as one enters the building an excellent vista through the lounge and over the main piazza to the golf course is opened up.

On the main floor are those rooms which are used the most frequently. Of these the more important is the lounge, a panelled room with carved frieze and pilaster, following the English Georgian precedent as used in Charleston and other parts of the Old South. This room is furnished in a way commensurate with its dignity with reproduction mahogany and walnut furniture like one of the great country houses of the XVIII century. To the right of the lounge are stairs leading to the second story and to the men's quarters in the basement floor. Beyond these stairs are the private dining room, and general dining room. The private dining room will accommodate a party of about twenty, and the large dining room one hundred and twenty-five, although when dinner dances are given, the center of the floor will be left open for dancing and seats for at least eighty will be available around the walls. This dining room is of unusual shape, with octagonal ends and of great height, lending itself to a modified English Georgian treatment. The porches and piazzas are very lovely and extended views of the golf course and the pleasant valley through which runs the mountain brook may be had. In the second floor is a large private dining room or meeting room and eight bedrooms comfortably furnished in the colonial style, with well equipped bath rooms.

LOUNGE, MOUNTAIN BROOK COUNTRY CLUB, BIRMINGHAM, ALA.

The wing of the building is on sharply sloping grounds. The basement is as fully lighted as the main floor. Advantage has been taken of this factor to segregate the athletic activities from the purely social so that the varieties of costume employed will create no embarrassment. On the men's side is a locker room for two hundred and twenty, a big and attractive grill, and game room with tile floor, and comfortable and handsome furniture, adequate and well designed showers and toilet rooms, and a separate dressing room for boys. On the women's side is an octagonal lounge with all the comfortable furniture required for seating after games, a number of small dressing rooms for those who wish to use the pool, a locker room for eighty, good shower and toilet rooms, and toilet rooms for girl children.

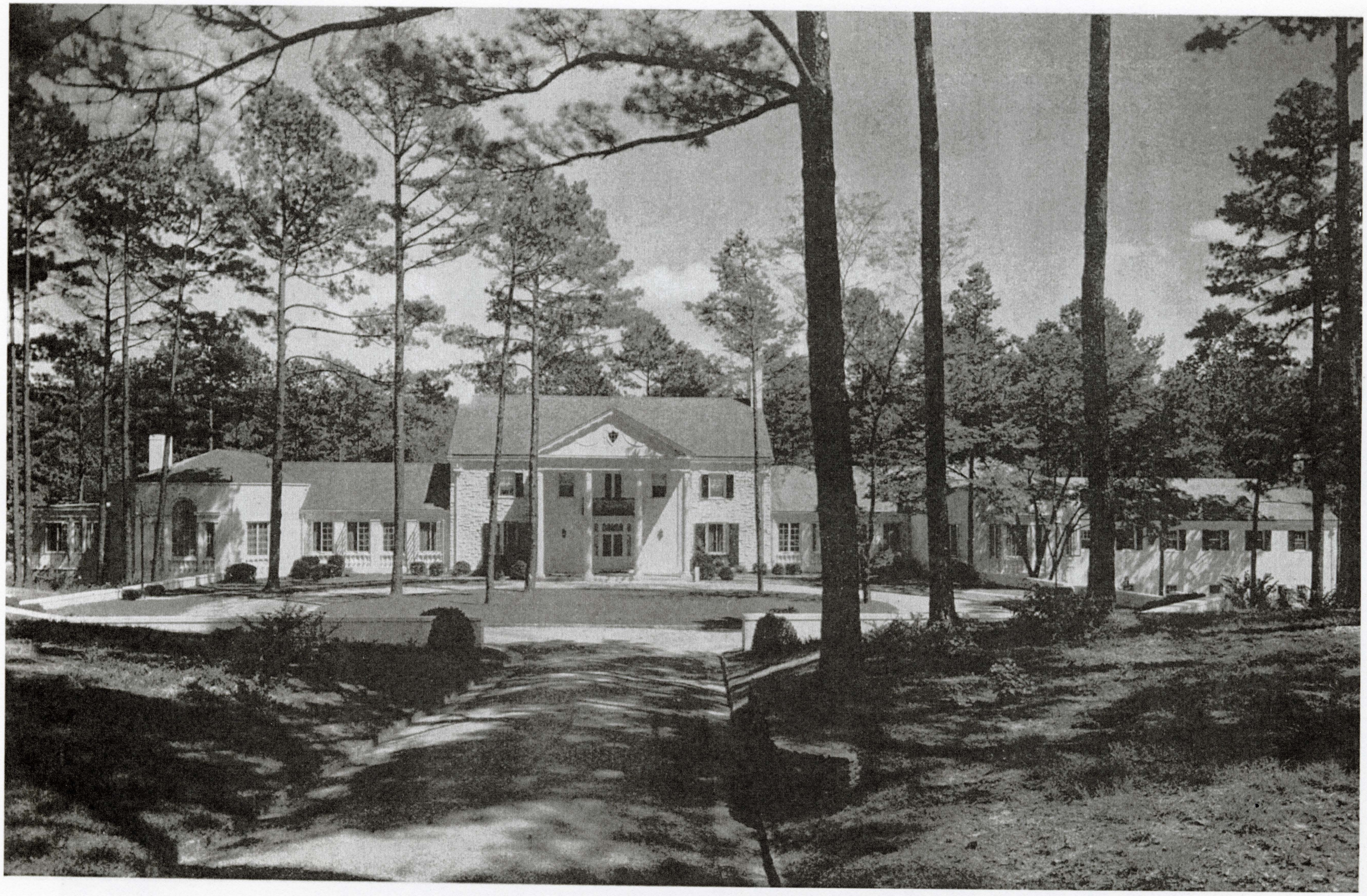
Separate entrances are provided for the men's and women's locker rooms and the boys' and girls' locker rooms to the golf course, tennis courts, and pool. The golf professional's shop is so located that it can be readily reached by either the men or women golfers without passing each other's quarters. All the principal rooms are provided with fire places.

A very noteworthy feature is the care with which the problem of ventilation has been studied. The ball room, the main dining room, and the men's grill room have windows on all four sides, the lounge on three sides with excellent cross draught and the men's and women's locker rooms have cross ventilation by windows in opposite sides.

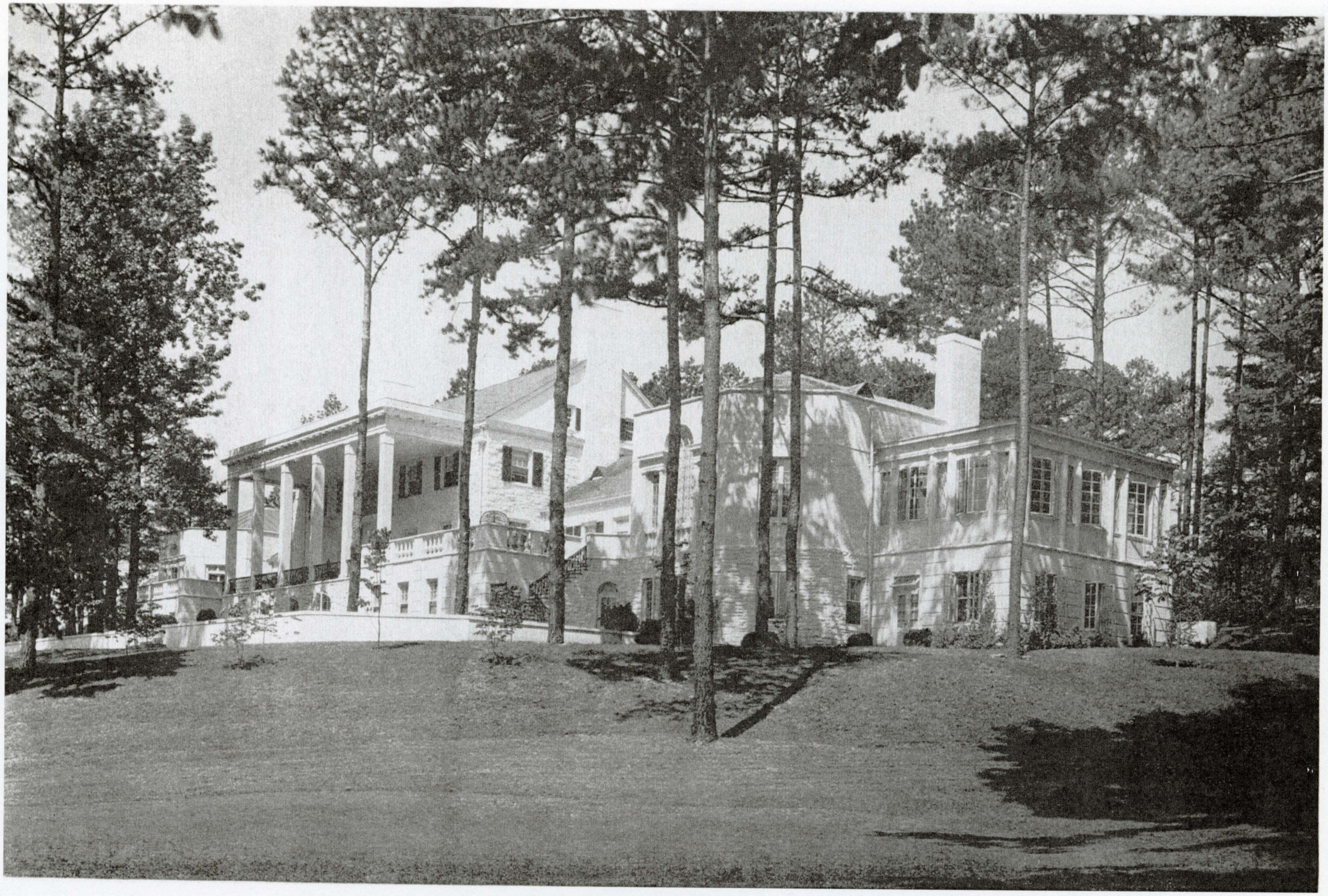
All desirable accessories, such as valet's and maid's room with driers for wet clothing, pressing spaces, and provision for service of tea or ice drinks in any part of the club have been provided.

The pool is in close connection with the house, on a terrace somewhat lower than the basement floor, and so placed that it will neither be annoying because of the noise of the bathers nor of the glare from the pool, nor will it be so far away that its colorful activity is out of sight of those who wish to see it.

In conclusion, it may be said that both the building committee and the architects made a careful study of those country clubs most successful socially and artistically and tried to avoid errors committed by them where those in charge of operations have pointed them out, and believe that they have succeeded in making this building one of the most attractive, practical and charming of any in the United States.

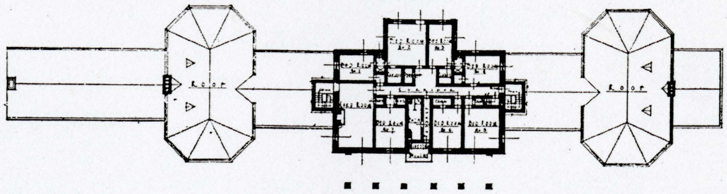


ENTRANCE FACADE, MOUNTAIN BROOK COUNTRY CLUB, BIRMINGHAM, ALA.
AYMAR EMBURY, II, AND MILLER & MARTIN, ASSOCIATED ARCHITECTS

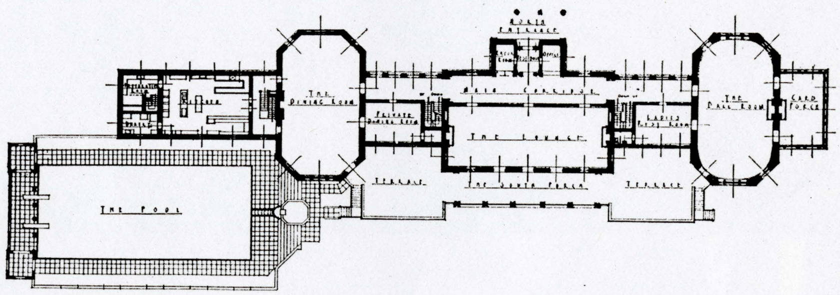


REAR FACADE, MOUNTAIN BROOK COUNTRY CLUB, BIRMINGHAM, ALA.

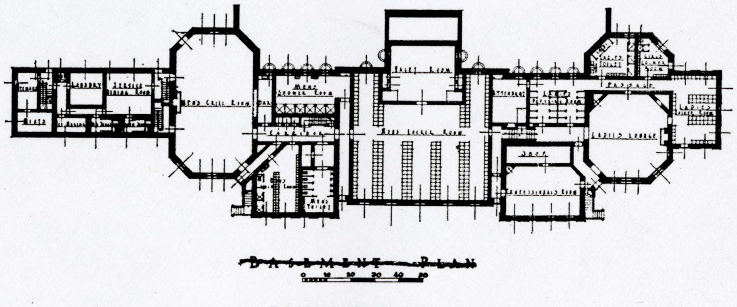
AYMAR EMBURY, II, AND MILLER & MARTIN, ASSOCIATED ARCHITECTS



SECOND FLOOR


NORTH ENTRANCE
OFFICE
MAIN CORRIDOR
KITCHEN
THE DINING ROOM
PRIVATE DINING ROOM
THE LOUNGE
LADIES REST ROOM
THE BALL ROOM
CARD PORCH
TERRACE
THE SOUTH PORCH
TERRACE
THE POOL

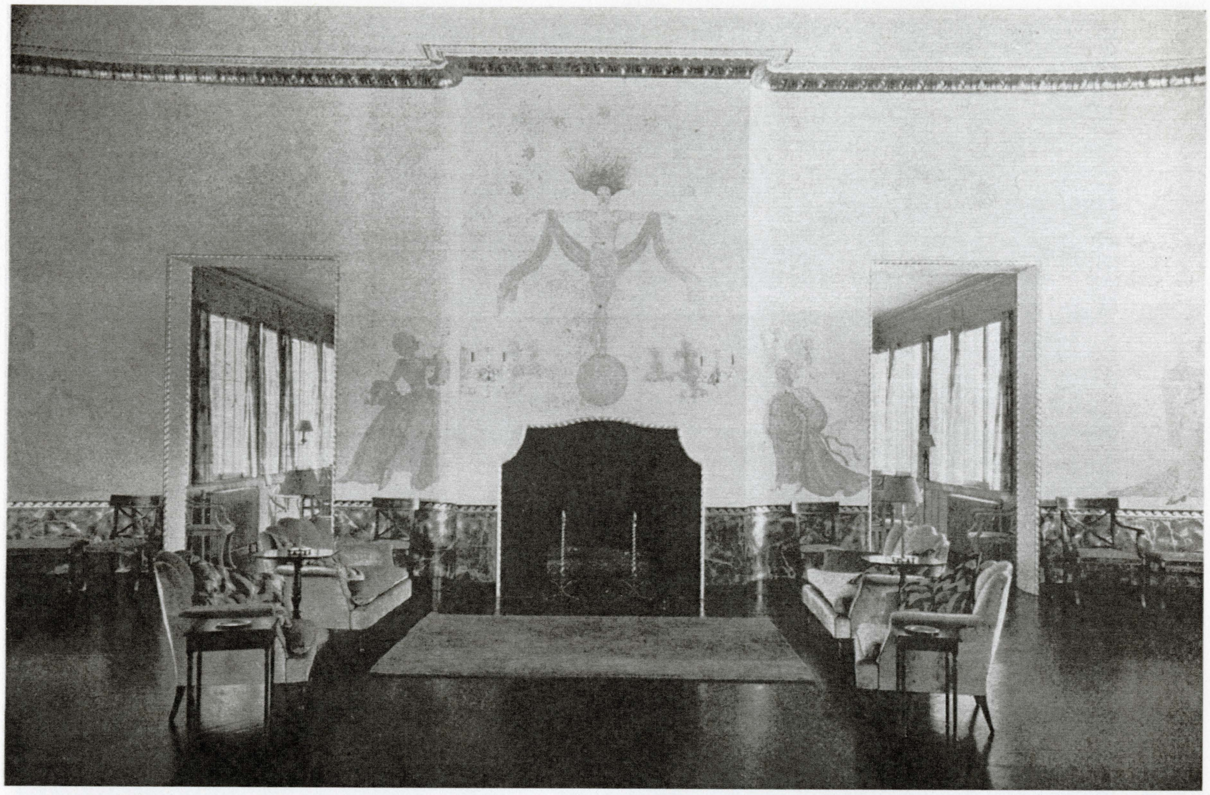
FIRST FLOOR

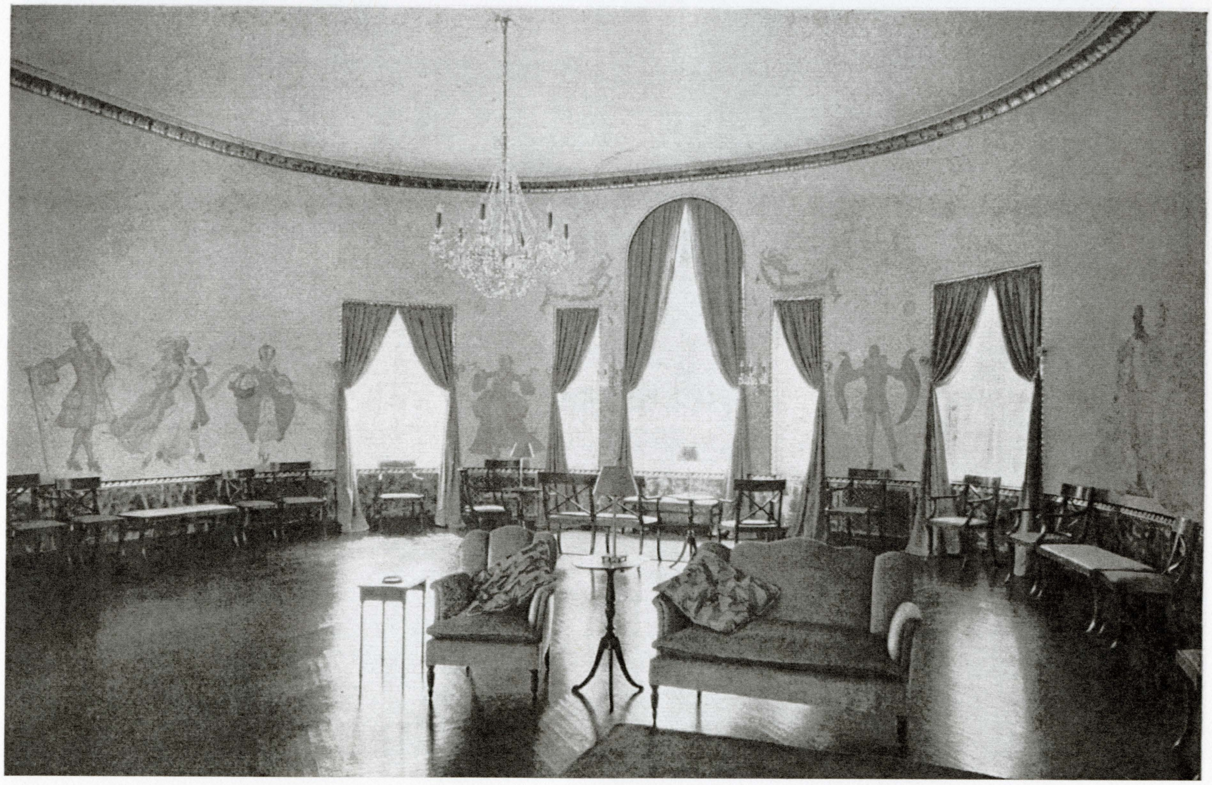

LAUNDRY
SERVICE DINING ROOM
MEN'S GRILL ROOM
MENS SHOWER ROOM
CORRIDOR
MENS TOILET
FIRST ROOM
MENS LOCKER ROOM
ATTENDANT
PASSAGE
LADIES LOUNGE
SHOP
PROFESSIONAL'S ROOM
BASEMENT PLAN
0 10 20 30 40 50

BASEMENT FLOOR

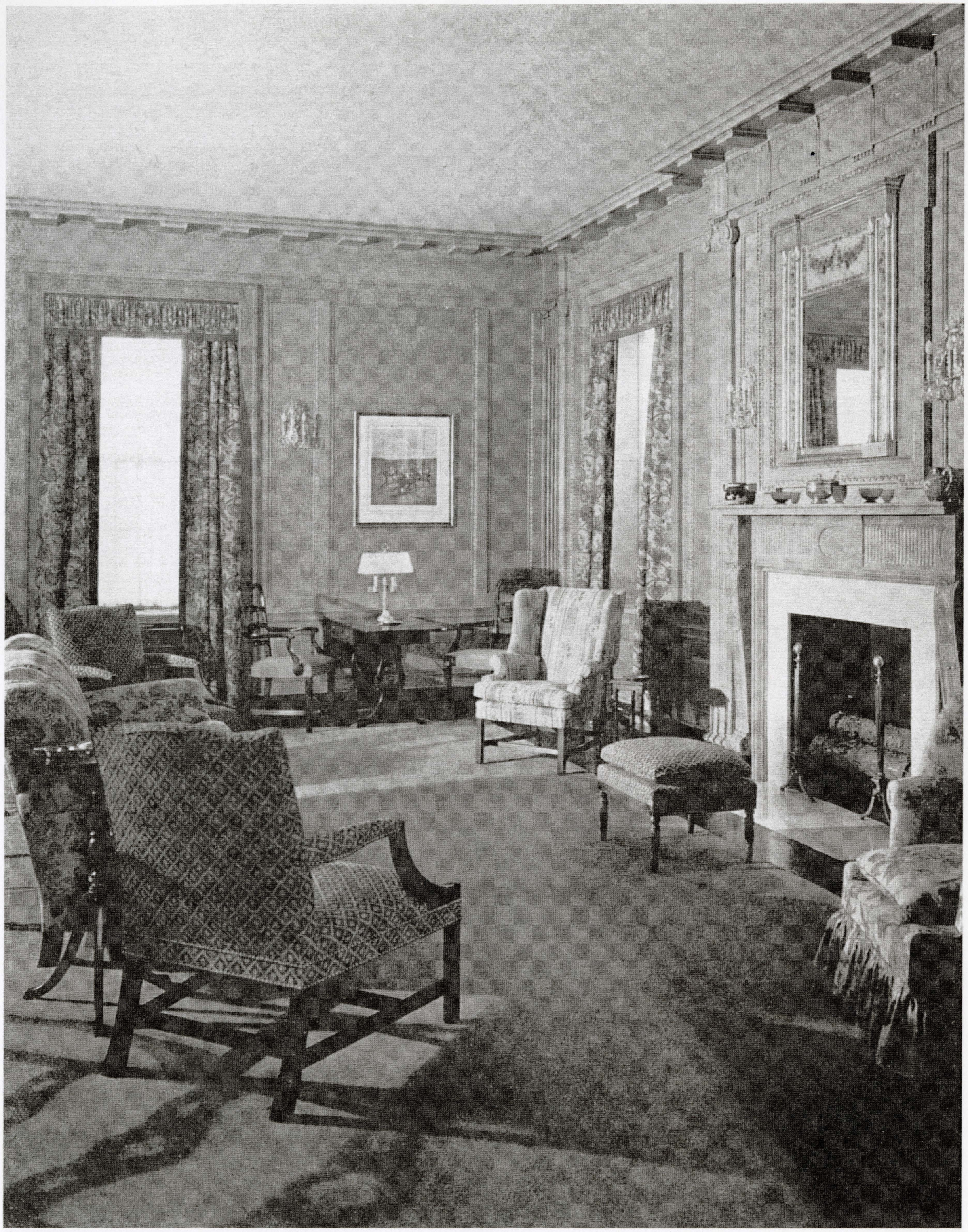
MOUNTAIN BROOK COUNTRY CLUB, BIRMINGHAM, ALA.

AYMAR EMBURY, II, AND MILLER & MARTIN, ASSOCIATED ARCHITECTS





BALL ROOM, MOUNTAIN BROOK COUNTRY CLUB, BIRMINGHAM, ALA.
AYMAR EMBURY, II, AND MILLER & MARTIN, ASSOCIATED ARCHITECTS



DETAIL IN LOUNGE, MOUNTAIN BROOK COUNTRY CLUB, BIRMINGHAM, ALA.

AYMAR EMBURY, II, AND MILLER & MARTIN, ASSOCIATED ARCHITECTS

PUBLISHED BY THE BIRMINGHAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY
UPON THE OCCASION OF THE HERITAGE SOCIETY GATHERING
AT THE MOUNTAIN BROOK CLUB
APRIL 6, 2014
FROM A REPRINT OF THE ARTICLE THAT ORIGINALLY APPEARED IN THE
SOUTHERN ARCHITECT AND BUILDING NEWS, ATLANTA, GEORGIA, APRIL 1931
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